

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 5-8 are presently pending in this application, Claims 1-4 and 9-11 having been canceled, and Claim 8 having been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for being indefinite. However, Claims 5-7 were indicated as allowed, and Claim 8 was indicated as including allowable subject matter.

First, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indications that Claims 5-7 have been allowed and that Claim 8 would be allowable if amended to overcome the outstanding rejection based on indefiniteness. Accordingly, Claim 8 has been amended to clarify its subject matter. Specifically, Claim 8 has been amended to further limit that each ion exchanger is provided with a valve (main route valve) for interrupting supply of pure water. For example, the valves (V1, V4) as illustrated in Figures 7 correspond to the main route valves. Thus, Claim 8 is believed to be in compliance with the requirements of the statute. If, however, the Examiner disagrees with the amendments presented above, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually agreeable claim language and expedite the prosecution of this application. Also, Applicants respectfully request that Claims 1-4 and 9-11 be canceled without prejudice.

In light of the prior indication of allowable subject matters and in view of the amendments presented above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding and thus the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request an early and favorable action to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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